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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/620,632	07/16/2003	Horst Henn	IL920030022US1	1717
7590 03/29/2008				
Stephen C. Kaufman Intellectual Property Law Dept. IBM Corporation P.O. Box 218 Yorktown Heights, NY 10598			EXAMINER TARAE, CATHERINE MICHELLE	
			ART UNIT 3623	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 03/20/2008	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/620,632

**Applicant(s)**

HENN ET AL.

**Examiner**

C. Michelle Tarae

**Art Unit**

3623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/13/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is a Non-Final Office Action in response to the communication received on July 16, 2003. Claims 1-33 are now pending in this application.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hirose (U.S. 5,710,921).

As per claim 1, Hirose discloses a system comprising:

a workflow system to provide a structure for a plurality of workflows and information regarding the workflow actors who are to perform a given workflow (Figures 1 and 6-7);  
and

an interface unit at least to provide an interface to said workflow system for performing a selected workflow and an interface to a collaboration system within which the actors of the current instance of said selected workflow can collaborate (col. 5, lines 55-58; Figure 2; A system includes a user interface that allows persons in charge of workflow steps to manage the workflows.).

As per claim 2, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 1 and wherein said interface unit comprises a support interface per support application, wherein said support application supports the work of said selected workflow (Figure 2).

As per claim 3, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 1 and wherein said actors comprise at least one of the following: workflow actors and external actors (col. 5, lines 64-66; col. 6, lines 31-32).

As per claim 4, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 3 and wherein said interface unit comprises a notifier to notify at least one workflow actor that a work item is waiting for him/her to act upon (col. 6, lines 22-25).

As per claim 5, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 4 and wherein said notifier comprises means for producing a hyperlink to said awaiting work item (col. 6, lines 63-66; When a person interacts with the interface to manage the workflow, interacting with the interface is in a sense providing the user with links/buttons/icons to select to indicate various states of the workflow.).

As per claim 6, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 1 and also comprising a correspondence unit to accumulate correspondences of said actors when performing said current instance of said selected workflow (col. 12, lines 41-44 and 56-58; col. 12, line 66-col. 13, line 4).

As per claim 7, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 6 and wherein said correspondence unit comprises means for sending a hyperlink to a location where a workflow actor may process a work item (col. 6, lines 63-66; When a person interacts with the interface to manage the workflow, interacting with the interface is in a sense

providing the user with links/buttons/icons to select to indicate various states of the workflow.).

As per claim 8, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 7 and wherein said correspondence unit additionally comprises means for transferring control of a work item from a first workflow actor to a second workflow actor (col. 13, lines 28-64; Figure 6).

As per claim 9, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 1 and wherein each said interface includes a portlet (col. 5, line 59-col. 6, line 3; Figures 1-2).

As per claim 10, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 2 and wherein said support interface includes a portlet (col. 5, line 59-col. 6, line 3; Figures 1-2).

As per claim 11, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 1 and wherein said interface unit comprises means for providing a contact list of at least of some of said actors to said collaboration system (col. 6, lines 31-35; Figure 6).

As per claim 12, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 11 and wherein said means for providing comprises means for activating a staff resolution component of said workflow system to determine said actors for said current workflow (col. 6, lines 31-35; col. 7, lines 24-29).

As per claim 13, Hirose discloses a system according to claim 12 and wherein said means for activating comprises means for selecting a portion of said actors according to a current work item to be performed (col. 6, lines 31-35; col. 7, lines 24-29).

Claims 14-33 recite subject matter similar to those already rejected above.  
Therefore, claims 14-33 are rejected on the same basis as claims 1-13 above.

### ***Conclusion***

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Okita et al. (U.S. 7,221,377) discusses a workflow management system;
- Hecht (U.S. 5,535,322) discusses a workflow system;
- Flores et al. (U.S. 5,734,837) discusses an apparatus for building workflows;
- Flores et al. (U.S. 6,073,109) discusses an apparatus for building workflows;
- Mital et al. (U.S. 7,184,967) discusses a workflow management system
- Tokuda et al. (U.S. 6,401,073) discusses a workflow management system
- Hayashi (U.S. 6,349,287) discusses a workflow management system;
- Goodridge et al. (U.S. 5,848,393) discusses a workflow management system;
- Berg et al. (U.S. 5,999,911) discusses a workflow management system;
- Goodridge et al. (U.S. 5,799,297) discusses a workflow management system;
- and
- Chatterjee et al. (U.S. 5,774,661) discusses a workflow management system.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to C. Michelle Tarae whose telephone number is 571-272-

Art Unit: 3623

6727. The examiner can normally be reached Monday – Friday from 8:30am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz, can be reached at 571-272-6729.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/C. Michelle Tarae/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3623

March 12, 2008